

The Mount Vernon Exploratory School Hall County School System

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Every school has its own story to tell. The context in which teaching and learning takes place influences the processes and procedures by which the school makes decisions around curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The context also impacts the way a school stays faithful to its vision. Many factors contribute to the overall narrative such as an identification of stakeholders, a description of stakeholder engagement, the trends and issues affecting the school, and the kinds of programs and services that a school implements to support student learning.

The purpose of the Executive Summary (ES) is to provide a school with an opportunity to describe in narrative form the strengths and challenges it encounters. By doing so, the public and members of the school community will have a more complete picture of how the school perceives itself and the process of self-reflection for continuous improvement. This summary is structured for the school to reflect on how it provides teaching and learning on a day to day basis.

Description of the School

Describe the school's size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced in the last three years. Include demographic information about the students, staff, and community at large. What unique features and challenges are associated with the community/communities the school serves?

Located in Hall County, approximately sixty miles north of Atlanta, Mount Vernon Elementary was established in 1993 on what was once rolling pastureland. The first Mount Vernon School dates back to the 1800's and at one time stood less than a mile from the present site. One of 20 elementary schools in the Hall County School system, Mount Vernon was formed in1993 to ease overcrowding at two local schools. In Spring of 2003, ten new classrooms were added, followed by an expansion of the current lunchroom and gymnasium.

In the Spring of 2002, Mount Vernon was named a Georgia School of Excellence, one of only nine elementary schools in the state to receive the honor. The visiting committee at that time acknowledged that teamwork between community and school is one of our strongest assets. This continuing partnership ensures that our students are provided with the best possible education as we began to pursue a charter school initiative. In spring of 2012, Mount Vernon was granted official charter school status by the Georgia Department of Education. Our new conversion charter school was voted upon and named The Mount Vernon Exploratory School.

The current student population at Mount Vernon is 655 students. We serve students in kindergarten through fifth grades. We serve a wide variety of varying needs of our students through inclusion, co-teaching, and resource classrooms.

There is a growing desire among the parents of Hall County students for schools that are innovative and break the mold of traditional education. Gaining acceptance to colleges and universities is becoming increasingly competitive, along with the job market. It is our desire to give our students an edge to skills that are lacking for colleges and careers, which research shows are collaboration, problem solving, communication, and higher level thinking, which are the very reasons we choose project-based learning as our charter initiative. Through our charter, it is the mission of The Mount Vernon Exploratory School to offer students extensive opportunities to build authentic learning experiences through project-based learning, best practice instruction, and using 21st Century cutting edge tools of technology.

There is also a growing trend among our economically disadvantaged students lacking "real world" connection and communication skills. The subgroup of economically disadvantaged students at MVES has grown 14% over the past six years. As this subgroup population trend continues with the declining economy, students need more exposure to applied learning opportunities.

School's Purpose

Provide the school's purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs. Describe how the school embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students.

Mission

It is the mission of The Mount Vernon Exploratory School to offer students extensive opportunities to build authentic learning experiences through project-based learning, best practice instruction, and using 21st Century cutting edge tools of technology.

Mount Vernon Elementary School LEADS

Mission Statement:

Motivating,

Valuing, and

Empowering

Students for success

Vision Statement:

At Mount Vernon Elementary, the team of students, staff, parents, and community:

Learns together

Enriches lives

Advances knowledge

Develops futures

Strives for success

Belief Statements:

We believe:

- 1) Each student has the right to a safe, orderly, and supportive learning environment.
- 2) All students can learn, achieve, and succeed while respecting the uniqueness of others.
- 3) Teachers and staff members will plan curriculum and instruction based on each child's learning needs.
- 4) Technology will support our students in becoming successful, lifelong learners.
- 5) The partnerships among parents, educators, students, and the community are vital to our success.
- 6) We will provide authentic and challenging learning experiences for all students.
- 7) Education is an on-going process that will prepare students for success in a continuously changing society.

Our charter school status and goals allow for project-based learning opportunities with specific waivers in scheduling and allowing students outside of our attendance zone. Project-based learning provides opportunities for students to explore real-world issues and questions and to make decisions about how they will find answers and solve problems. Students' activities will be constructive and purposeful and allow them to develop independence and responsibility. Children who are excited about what they are learning dig more deeply, expand their interests, and retain what they have learned. They make connections and apply their learning to other problems. This approach allows them to collaborate, build social skills, solve problems, and think critically.

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Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

Describe the school's notable achievements and areas of improvement in the last three years. Additionally, describe areas for improvement that the school is striving to achieve in the next three years.

- --Partner in Education with Home Depot- providing student display boards for hallways and plans for outdoor science lab.
- --Increase in science and social studies CRCT scores across the board due to PBL units
- --5th grade increase in CRCT "exceeds" scores due to authentic learning experiences through PBL and Enrichment Clusters
- --Established a central science lab for community members and parental partnership/involvement. This will allow students to learn from "experts in the field" and experience authentic learning.
- --National and International Consultants for Professional Development: Partnership with Tech-4-Learning- 100% staff participation in PBL training; Tony Vincent 100% staff participation in technology integration.
- -- Due to charter funding, we were able to provide technology devices to students: laptops at a 4:1 ratio (formerly 28:1) plus additional technology supports (microphones, digital microscopes, cameras- still & video, iPods in every Kindergarten class, Sifteo cubes for gifted program to increase problem solving/creative thinking, science data hubs to collect real life data and interfaces with Google Maps to compare the data.
- -- Visited charter schools in San Diego, CA and building partnerships with those schools.
- -- Updated school website to create "real time" communication
- -- a 2nd grade MVES student, Sarah Morris, was featured on the CBS Morning News-Atlanta for state recognition on her PBL project on health and fitness
- -- a 5th grade MVES student, Trey Grimsley, was named "Georgia Association of Gifted Children- Student of the Year" for his work with PBL and gifted classes.
- --Coordinated and facilitated a community "Math Mania" competition between 5 local elementary schools (similar to MathFest competitions in the state of Georgia) for the past two years

Areas for improvement:

- --Increase math achievement/growth scores to be more equitable with our reading/language arts achievement.
- --Increase our percentage of students scoring in the "exceeds" category across the board in all academic areas.
- --Establish a literacy garden with outdoor learning stations.
- --Establish an outdoor science lab to enhance our current indoor science lab.
- --Build more partnerships with professionals in all career fields to learn from "experts in the field."

Additional Information

Provide any additional information you would like to share with the public and community that were not prompted in the previous sections.

Enrichment Clusters- from clubs to interest-based inquiry projects: Our Enrichment Clusters have evolved from "student clubs" to project-based learning. This involves all grade levels K-5 students participating. Enrichment Clusters (EC's) take place during the school day for an eight week session. Students chose interest areas and are placed accordingly into EC's with other students sharing common interests. These EC's are inquiry-based, which means that they are based on real world problem solving. The students will use high level thinking as they are involved in decision making, planning, and problem solving. The EC's have passed the "dinner table" test with students excited about learning and talking about their day at school with their families.

Self Assessment

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Introduction

AdvancED's Self Assessment (SA) diagnostic is based on the AdvancED Standards of Quality, which serves as the foundation of the accreditation and continuous improvement process. The SA is a valuable tool for collaboratively engaging staff members and stakeholders in purposeful, honest dialogue and reflection to assess the institution's adherence to the Standards, and guide its continuous improvement efforts. The SA includes the institution's self-ratings of and the evidence cited for each of the indicators, comments that explain the indicator's ratings and an overall narrative for each Standard. The results of the SA are reviewed by the External Review Team as one essential component of the preparation process for the institution's External Review.

Standard 1: Purpose and Direction

The school maintains and communicates a purpose and direction that commit to high expectations for learning as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning.

Overall Rating: 3.0

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
1.1	The school engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a school purpose for student success.	The school's process for review, revision, and communication of the purpose statement is documented. The process is formalized and implemented on a regular schedule. The process includes participation by representatives from all stakeholder groups. The purpose statement focuses on student success.	Survey results Examples of communications to stakeholders about the school's purpose (i.e. website, newsletters, annual report, student handbook) Communication plan to stakeholders regarding the school's purpose Documentation or description of the process for creating the school's purpose including the role of stakeholders Purpose statements - past and present	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
1.2	The school's leadership and staff commit to a culture that is based on shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning and supports challenging, equitable educational programs and learning experiences for all students that include achievement of learning, thinking, and life skills.	Commitment to shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning is evident in documentation and decision making. This commitment is regularly reflected in communication among leaders and staff. Challenging educational programs and equitable learning experiences are implemented so that all students achieve learning, thinking, and life skills necessary for success. Evidence indicates a commitment to instructional practices that include active student engagement, a focus on depth of understanding, and the application of knowledge and skills. School leadership and staff share high expectations for professional practice.	Agendas and/or minutes that reference a commitment to the components of the school's statement of purpose Survey results The school's statement of purpose	Level 3

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
1.3	The school's leadership	School leaders implement a	•Survey results	Level 3
	implements a continuous	documented, systematic continuous		
	improvement process that	improvement process for improving	•The school data profile	
provides clear direction for	student learning and the conditions that			
	improving conditions that support	support learning. All stakeholder groups	•Agenda, minutes from	
	student learning.	are engaged in the process. School	continuous improvement	
	3	personnel maintain a profile with current	planning meetings	
		and comprehensive data on student and		
		school performance. The profile contains	•Communication plan and	
		analyses of data used to identify goals	artifacts that show two-	
		for the improvement of achievement and	way communication to	
		instruction that are aligned with the	staff and stakeholders	
		school's purpose. Improvement goals		
		have measurable performance targets.	•The school continuous	
		The process includes action planning	improvement plan	
		that identifies measurable objectives,		
		strategies, activities, resources, and		
	timelines for achieving improvement			
		goals. School leaders hold all school		
		personnel accountable for and evaluate		
		the overall quality of the implementation		
	of all interventions and strategies. The			
	process is reviewed and evaluated.			
		Documentation that the process yields		
		improved student achievement and		
		instruction is available and		
		communicated to stakeholders.		

Reflect upon your responses to each of the indicators and performance levels by considering and responding to the following questions when drafting your narrative response. Use language from the performance level descriptions to guide your writing. Cite sources of evidence External Review team members may be interested in reviewing.

Pursuing charter status and implementing our new charter school helped this standard to be a strength. Our charter goals provides a common focus, shared values and beliefs, and improving student learning experiences. The areas of need include the goals of "always"," consistently," and ALL stakeholder groups working collaboratively and consistently. Professional learning has also become a strength due to our charter initiative, along with school-based leadership opportunities (School Improvement Team and Leadership Team)

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

The school operates under governance and leadership that promote and support student performance and school effectiveness.

Overall Rating: 3.17

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.1	The governing body establishes policies and supports practices that ensure effective administration of the school.	the school. Policies and practices require and have mechanisms in place for monitoring effective instruction and	Student handbooks Governing body policies, procedures, and practices Communications to stakeholder about policy revisions School handbooks Summer Leadership and School Improvement Work Sessions, Charter Governing Board minutes, Leadership Team and School Improvement Team meeting minutes, Hall County BOE policies and procedures	Level 4

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.2	The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.	The governing body has a process to ensure that its decisions and actions are in accordance with defined roles and responsibilities, a code of ethics, and free of conflict of interest. Governing body members participate in a systematic, formal professional development process regarding the roles and responsibilities of the governing body and its individual members. The governing body complies with all policies, procedures, laws, and regulations and functions as a cohesive unit.	Governing body minutes relating to training Communication plan to inform all staff on code of ethics, responsibilities, conflict of interest Assurances, certifications Governing body training plan Findings of internal and external reviews of compliance with laws, regulations, and policies Communications about program regulations Historical compliance data Governing body policies on roles and responsibilities, conflict of interest Governing code of ethics Charter Governing Board training (annually), Compliance Director training (annually), Principal- leadership training from system and state (principal and AP district meetings), Georgia Leadership Conference from DOE, GAPSS reviews, Charter Annual Reports	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.3	The governing body ensures that the school leadership has the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations effectively.	The governing body protects, supports, and respects the autonomy of school leadership to accomplish goals for improvement in student learning and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations of the school. The governing body maintains a distinction between its roles and responsibilities and those of school leadership.	Roles and responsibilities of school leadership School improvement plan developed by the school Stakeholder input and feedback Maintenance of consistent academic oversight, planning, and resource allocation Communications regarding board actions survey results regarding functions of the governing body Agendas and minutes of meetings School Improvement Plans, Charter Goals, Charter Governing Board minutes,	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.4	Leadership and staff foster a culture consistent with the school's purpose and direction.	Leaders and staff align their decisions and actions toward continuous improvement to achieve the school's purpose. They expect all students to be held to high standards in all courses of study. All leaders and staff are collectively accountable for student learning. School leaders support innovation, collaboration, shared leadership, and professional growth. The culture is characterized by collaboration and a sense of community.	Examples of collaboration and shared leadership Survey results Examples of decisions aligned with the school's statement of purpose Examples of decisions in support of the school's continuous improvement plan Charter goals, Professional Learning aligned to these goals, TKES goals, School Improvement Plan, Charter Governing Board minutes, Community outreach opportunities (Parent Tech Time, Internet Safety, Business Partners, Student Council, PTO Board, Coffee & Conversations).	Level 3

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.5	effectively in support of the school's purpose and direction.	Leaders sometimes communicate effectively with stakeholder groups, provide opportunities for stakeholders to shape decisions, solicit feedback from stakeholders, work collaboratively on school improvement efforts, and provide some leadership roles for stakeholders. School leaders' efforts result in some stakeholder participation and engagement in the school.	Minutes from meetings with stakeholders Survey responses Involvement of stakeholders in a school improvement plan Infinite Campus messenger, school website, Leadership Team with parent members, Student Council, Charter Governing Board,	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.6	Leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes result in improved professional practice and student success.	The primary focus of the criteria and processes of supervision and evaluation is improving professional practice and ensuring student success. Supervision and evaluation processes are consistently and regularly implemented. The results of the supervision and evaluation processes are analyzed carefully and used to monitor and effectively adjust professional practice and ensure student learning.	Examples of professional development offerings and plans tied specifically to the results from supervision and evaluation Governing body policy on supervision and evaluation Job specific criteria Representative supervision and evaluation reports Data Analysis meetings, TKES informal and formal evaluations, conferencing with staff (at least 3x), professional learning aligned with goals and data	

Reflect upon your responses to each of the indicators and performance levels by considering and responding to the following questions when drafting your narrative response. Use language from the performance level descriptions to guide your writing. Cite sources of evidence External Review team members may be interested in reviewing.

The noted strengths at MVES include: leadership policies and support practices are established; and supervision and evaluation are aligned and adjusted to improved professional practice and student success. Areas that need improvement are "measurable" active stakeholder participation, and leaders consistent communication to solicit feedback and respond to stakeholders. We will continue to monitor and analyze our student achievement to align with charter goals, TKES evaluations, and school improvement initiatives. We will strive to improve our methods of communication, to provide additional opportunities for stakeholder feedback, and to accurately measure active stakeholder participation (in addition to Student Council, PTO Board, Charter Governing Board).

Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning

The school's curriculum, instructional design, and assessment practices guide and ensure teacher effectiveness and student learning.

Overall Rating: 2.75

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.1	The school's curriculum provides equitable and challenging learning experiences that ensure all students have sufficient opportunities to develop learning,	Curriculum and learning experiences in each course/class provide all students with challenging and equitable opportunities to develop learning skills, thinking skills, and life skills. There is some evidence to indicate curriculum and learning experiences prepare students for success at the next level. Like courses/classes have equivalent learning expectations. Some learning activities are individualized for each student in a way that supports achievement of expectations.	Survey results Lesson plans Posted learning objectives Team Time, The Big Three/Core Values, Guidance and Career Pathway projects, Enrichment Clusters, Student Council, Safety Team, student competitions, PBL lessons	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.2	Curriculum, instruction, and assessment are monitored and adjusted systematically in response to data from multiple assessments of student learning and an examination of professional practice.	Using data from student assessments and an examination of professional practice, school personnel monitor and adjust curriculum, instruction, and assessment to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment and alignment with the school's goals for achievement and instruction and statement of purpose. There is a process in place to ensure alignment each time curriculum, instruction, and/or assessments are reviewed or revised. The continuous improvement process ensures that vertical and horizontal alignment as well as alignment with the school's purpose are maintained and enhanced in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.	Curriculum guides Common assessments Standards-based report cards Surveys results Curriculum writing process Products – scope and sequence, curriculum maps Lesson plans aligned to the curriculum Short-Term Action Plan, School-Wide Writing, Unit Assessments,	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.3	Teachers engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.	Teachers sometimes use instructional strategies that require student collaboration, self-reflection, and development of critical thinking skills. Teachers personalize instructional strategies and interventions to address individual learning needs of groups of students when necessary. Teachers sometimes use instructional strategies that require students to apply knowledge and skills, integrate content and skills with other disciplines, and use technologies as instructional resources and learning tools.	Professional development focused on these strategies Examples of teacher use of technology as an instructional resource Examples of student use of technology as a learning tool Findings from supervisor walk-thrus and observations Surveys results Interdisciplinary projects TKES observations, PBL units, professional learning opportunities, lesson plans, data notebooks	

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.4	School leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.	School leaders formally and consistently monitor instructional practices through supervision and evaluation procedures to ensure that they 1) are aligned with the school's values and beliefs about teaching and learning, 2) are teaching the approved curriculum, 3) are directly engaged with all students in the oversight of their learning, and 4) use content-specific standards of professional practice.	Curriculum maps Supervision and evaluation procedures Peer or mentoring opportunities and interactions Recognition of teachers with regard to these practices Surveys results Examples of improvements to instructional practices resulting from the evaluation process Administrative classroom observation protocols and logs Lesson plan checked during walk-throughs, data analysis meetings, TKES conferencing	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.5	Teachers participate in collaborative learning communities to improve instruction and student learning.	All members of the school staff participate in collaborative learning communities that meet both informally and formally. Collaboration often occurs across grade levels and content areas. Staff members have been trained to implement a formal process that promotes discussion about student learning. Learning from, using, and discussing the results of inquiry practices such as action research, the examination of student work, reflection, study teams, and peer coaching occur regularly among most school personnel. School personnel indicate that collaboration causes improvement results in instructional practice and student performance.	Examples of cross curricular projects, interdisciplinary instruction, and classroom action research project Agendas and minutes of collaborative learning committees Calendar/schedule of learning community meetings Survey results Enrichment Clusters, minutes from grade-level meetings, professional learning stations, unit assessment feedback, PBL units, Museum Nights	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.6		process that informs students of learning expectations and standards of performance. Exemplars are sometimes provided to guide and inform students. The process may include multiple	Examples of learning expectations and standards of performance Survey results Samples of exemplars used to guide and inform student learning Essential Questions, TKES observations, informal/formal assessments	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.7	Mentoring, coaching, and induction programs support instructional improvement consistent with the school's values and beliefs about teaching and learning.	Some school personnel are engaged in mentoring, coaching, and induction programs that are consistent with the school's values and beliefs about teaching, learning, and the conditions that support learning. These programs set expectations for school personnel.	Records of meetings and walk thrus/feedback sessions Survey results Professional learning calendar with activities for instructional support of new staff School Improvement Team, Leadership Team, new teachers assigned a mentor,	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.8	The school engages families in meaningful ways in their children's education and keeps them informed of their children's learning progress.	Programs that engage families in meaningful ways in their children's education are designed, implemented, and evaluated. Families have multiple ways of staying informed of their children's learning progress.	Survey results Volunteer program with variety of options for participation List of varied activities and communications modes with families, e.g., info portal, online, newsletters, parent centers, academic nights, open house, early release days Calendar outlining when and how families are provided information on child's progress Parental/family/caregiver involvement plan including activities, timeframes, and evaluation process Student conferences, Tech Time for parents, Museum Nights-PBL presentations, School and Classroom Newsletters, Curriculum Nights, PTO Fall Festival- Movie Night-Sock Hop, Coffee and Conversations with the Principal.	Level 4

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.9	whereby each student is well known by at least one adult	School personnel participate in a structure that gives them interaction with individual students, allowing them to build relationships over time with the student. Most students participate in the structure. The structure allows the school employee to gain insight into the student's needs regarding learning skills, thinking skills, and life skills.	structure Description of formal adult advocate structures	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.10	Grading and reporting are based on clearly defined criteria that represent the attainment of content knowledge and skills and are consistent across grade levels and courses.	Teachers use common grading and reporting policies, processes, and procedures based on clearly defined criteria that represent each student's attainment of content knowledge and skills. These policies, processes, and procedures are implemented consistently across grade levels and courses. Stakeholders are aware of the policies, processes, and procedures. The policies, processes, and procedures are regularly evaluated.	*Evaluation process for grading and reporting practices *Survey results *Sample report cards for each grade level and for all courses *Sample communications to stakeholders about grading and reporting *Policies, processes, and procedures on grading and reporting *Common Rubrics & Grading Weights per grade level, Standards Based Report Cards for grades 1 & 2, GKIDS, communication folders to parents.	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.11	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning.	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning that is aligned with the school's purpose and direction. Professional development is based on an assessment of needs of the school. The program builds capacity among all professional and support staff. The program is systematically evaluated for effectiveness in improving instruction, student learning, and the conditions that support learning.	Results of evaluation of professional learning program. Survey results Brief explanation of alignment between professional learning and identified needs Crosswalk between professional learning and school purpose and direction Professional learning all year (on-going), School Improvement Teams survey for needs, PL aligned to student achievement, PL stations	Level 3

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.12	The school provides and coordinates learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.	School personnel use data to identify unique learning needs of all students at all levels of proficiency as well as other learning needs (such as second languages). School personnel stay current on research related to unique characteristics of learning (such as learning styles, multiple intelligences, personality type indicators) and provide or coordinate related learning support services to all students.	List of learning support services and student population served by such services Training and professional learning related to research on unique characteristics of learning Data used to identify unique learning needs of students EIP, ESL, SPED, additional RTI support, Enrichment Clusters, Renzulli Surveys, afterschool tutoring, Instructional Extension, mentor program, parent volunteers	Level 3

Reflect upon your responses to each of the indicators and performance levels by considering and responding to the following questions when drafting your narrative response. Use language from the performance level descriptions to guide your writing. Cite sources of evidence External Review team members may be interested in reviewing.

The mission of MVES is to offer students extensive opportunities to build authentic learning experiences through project-based learning, best practice instruction, and using 21st Century cutting edge tools of technology. The school focuses on the 3 C's for future college/career success: Collaboration, Communication, and Critical Thinking. Our charter has resulted in the following strengths reflected through achievement data and surveys: engaging families in meaningful ways, grading and reports, continuous professional learning.

All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional development that is aligned with the school's purpose and mission. School professional development sessions are carefully planned through surveys and evaluated by the School Improvement Team. The local PL sessions are conducted weekly and through Planned Release Time, each are structured for continuous, reflective, and purposeful professional development.

Areas to Improve/Weaknesses:

A formalized approach to mentoring, coaching and induction programs is needed to support instructional improvement consistent with the core values of our school. There is no formal structure for an adult advocate or other adult mentor other than the classroom teacher in place for students. Currently, there is no consistent school-wide practice to encourage student collaboration on instructional strategies and self-reflection. Exemplars and PBL rubrics are sometimes provided but this needs to be consistent throughout the school.

Actions to improve:

SY 2014-2015

Our Leadership Team and administration will create a formalized mentoring, coaching, and induction program. Teacher leaders will be trained on how to implement the program and new participants will be given an evaluation instrument to provide critical reflection on the program.

The administration and counselor are implementing the "MVES Families" initiative to provide student advocacy and foster positive relationships with another adult in the building (besides the classroom teacher). The Mt. Vernon Exploratory School Community Families program will have every staff member be the leader of their own group (or "family") comprised of kindergarten through fifth grade students. These families will meet on a monthly basis starting in January 2015. Every student will be placed in a family and any students who transfer

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in during the school year will be placed in a family to help make their transition easier. During the monthly meeting, staff members and students will build rapport with one other and establish an additional relationship at school with other students and an adult outside of their classroom teacher. The staff member will be another advocate for the child in the school setting and will keep up with the student throughout their educational career at Mt. Vernon. Students will stay in the same family until they leave Mt. Vernon.

Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems

The school has resources and provides services that support its purpose and direction to ensure success for all students.

Overall Rating: 3.14

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.1	Qualified professional and support staff are sufficient in number to fulfill their roles and responsibilities necessary to support the school's purpose, direction, and the educational program.	ensure that school leaders have access to, hire, place, and retain qualified professional and support staff. School leaders systematically determine the number of personnel necessary to fill all the roles and responsibilities necessary to support the school purpose, educational programs, and continuous improvement. Sustained fiscal resources	Policies, processes, procedures and other documentation related to the hiring, placement and retention of professional and support staff Documentation of highly qualified staff Hall County Schools policies and procedures, system budgets	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.2	Instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the school.	Instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are focused on supporting the purpose and direction of the school. Instructional time is protected in policy and practice. School leaders work to secure material and fiscal resources to meet the needs of all students. School leaders demonstrate that instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are allocated so that all students have equitable opportunities to attain challenging learning expectations. Efforts toward the continuous improvement of instruction and operations include achieving the school's	Examples of efforts of school leaders to secure necessary material and fiscal resources School schedule School calendar Adequate resources available for materials, Hall County Schools instructional budget,	Level 3
		purpose and direction.		

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.3	The school maintains facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment for all students and staff.	School leaders have adopted or collaboratively created clear definitions and expectations for maintaining safety, cleanliness, and a healthy environment and they have shared these definitions and expectations with all stakeholders. All school personnel and students are accountable for maintaining these expectations. Valid measures are in place that allow for continuous tracking of these conditions. Improvement plans are developed and implemented by appropriate personnel to continuously improve these conditions. The results of improvement efforts are systematically evaluated regularly.	*Survey results *Documentation of compliance with local and state inspections requirements *Documentation of emergency procedures such as fire drills, evacuation and other emergency procedures. *System for maintenance requests *Maintenance schedules *Safety committee responsibilities, meeting schedules, and minutes *Emergency plans, energy audits, exceptional custodial staff, SRO partnerships, local sheriff deputy walk-throughs, crisis training, GBI assisted training.	Level 4

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.4	Students and school personnel use a range of media and information resources to support the school's educational programs.	Students and school personnel have access to media and information resources necessary to achieve the educational programs of the school. Qualified personnel are available to assist students and school personnel in learning about the tools and locations for finding and retrieving information.	Budget related to media and information resource acquisition Survey results Data on media and information resources available to students and staff Schedule of staff availability to assist students and school personnel related to finding and retrieving information Hall Connect, professional books, math & literacy system lead teachers,	Level 3

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.5	The technology infrastructure supports the school's teaching, learning, and operational needs.	The technology infrastructure meets the teaching, learning, and operational needs of all stakeholders. School personnel develop and administer needs assessments and use the resulting data to develop and implement a technology plan to improve technology services and infrastructure.	Technology plan and budget to improve technology services and infrastructure Survey results Policies relative to technology use BYD local procedures, local school technology committee and long-range technology plan.	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.6	The school provides support services to meet the physical, social, and emotional needs of the student population being served.	School personnel implement a process to determine the physical, social, and emotional needs of each student in the school. School personnel provide or coordinate programs to meet the needs of students as necessary. Measures of program effectiveness are in place, and school personnel use the data from these measures to evaluate all programs. Improvement plans related to these programs are designed and implemented when needed to more effectively meet the needs of students.	•Agreements with school community agencies for student-family support •Survey results •Social classes and services, e.g., bullying, character education •List of support services available to students •Counseling groups (interventions for anger, bereavement, new students), partnerships with community resources (Back Pack Love, AVITA, etc), ADVANCE program,	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.7	support the counseling,	programs necessary to meet the needs of students whenever possible. Measures of program effectiveness are in place, and school personnel use the data from these measures to evaluate all programs. Improvement plans related to	List of services available related to counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning Survey results Description of IEP process Performs RTI process, parent referrals and placements, partnerships with NHHS for career classes,	Level 3

Reflect upon your responses to each of the indicators and performance levels by considering and responding to the following questions when drafting your narrative response. Use language from the performance level descriptions to guide your writing. Cite sources of evidence External Review team members may be interested in reviewing.

The Mount Vernon Exploratory School

Strengths: safe, clean, and healthy environment

The staff members at MVES maintains facilities, services and equipment to provide an safe and healthy environment. The school has a safety protocol and response team guidelines for emergencies included CPR trained staff and the Heart Smart team who are trained to use the AED and to respond to other emergency crises. MVES participates in inclement weather and fire drills. All visitors must check in with the front office with valid identification. Volunteers who work with children must complete a mandatory orientation and reporting training. Our staff also received extensive training from the GBI and local law enforcement for active-shooter situations. To maintain our areas of strength, we must continue to employ highly motivated and skilled custodians, school nurses, and reward them for their efforts. We need to continue our strong partnerships with our SRO and Sheriff deputies.

Weaknesses: equitable distribution of resources across system schools, evaluation of support services (effectiveness)

As our Special Education and Economically Disadvantaged populations continue to grow, additional resources will be needed. Material resources are limited through copy restrictions and less funding for consumable resources. With our increased use of technology, it is sometimes difficult to maintain hardware (projectors) and trouble-shoot technical issues when they arise.

To improve our areas of need, we will continue to seek outside funding sources (grants) for needed resources. We also need to research ways to evaluate the effectiveness of our support services (besides surveys).

Standard 5: Using Results for Continuous Improvement

The school implements a comprehensive assessment system that generates a range of data about student learning and school effectiveness and uses the results to guide continuous improvement.

Overall Rating: 3.0

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.1	The school establishes and maintains a clearly defined and comprehensive student assessment system.	School personnel maintain and use an assessment system that produces data from multiple assessment measures, including locally developed and standardized assessments about student learning and school performance. The system ensures consistent measurement across classrooms and courses. Most assessments, especially those related to student learning, are proven reliable and bias free. The system is regularly evaluated for reliability and effectiveness in improving instruction, student learning, and the conditions that support learning.	standardized and local assessments on student	Level 3

Indicator Sta	tatement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
co ap da co stu pro	ontinuously collect, analyze, and oply learning from a range of ata sources, including omparison and trend data about udent learning, instruction, ogram evaluation, and ganizational conditions.	Systematic processes and procedures for collecting, analyzing, and applying learning from all data sources are documented and used consistently by professional and support staff. Data sources include comparison and trend data that provide a comprehensive and complete picture of student learning, instruction, the effectiveness of programs, and the conditions that support learning. All school personnel use data to design, implement, and evaluate continuous improvement plans to improve student learning, instruction, the effectiveness of programs, and organizational conditions.	Survey results Examples of use of data to design, implement, and evaluate continuous improvement plans and apply learning List of data sources related to student learning, instruction, program effectiveness, and conditions that support learning Data notebooks, P-drive with data analysis documentation from annual data analysis meetings (by grade-level), School Improvement Team minutes, Pioneer RESA comparative data, charter goals- results.	Level 4

The Mount Vernon Exploratory School

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.3	Professional and support staff are trained in the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data.	All professional and support staff members are assessed and trained in a rigorous professional development program related to the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data.	Professional learning schedule specific to the use of data Documentation of attendance and training related to data use Survey results Training materials specific to the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data SLDS training, data analysis meetings, School Improvement Team minutes, assessment results and progress monitoring.	Level 3

Indicator S	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
c v le	continuous process to determine verifiable improvement in student learning, including readiness for and success at the next level.	A process exists for analyzing data that determine improvement in student learning, including readiness for and success at the next level. Results indicate mixed levels of improvement, and school personnel sometimes use these results to design, implement, and evaluate the results of continuous improvement action plans related to student learning, including readiness for and success at the next level.	Agendas, minutes of meetings related to analysis of data Examples of use of results to evaluate continuous improvement action plans Evidence of student readiness for the next level Evidence of student growth grade-level meeting minutes, annual data meetings, RTI progress monitoring and assessments, no formal policy on how to analyze student data consistently.	Level 2

The Mount Vernon Exploratory School

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.5	Leadership monitors and communicates comprehensive information about student learning, conditions that support student learning, and the achievement of school improvement goals to stakeholders.	Leaders monitor comprehensive information about student learning, conditions that support student learning, and the achievement of school improvement goals. Leaders regularly communicate results using multiple delivery methods to all stakeholder groups.	Minutes of board meetings regarding achievement of student learning goals Survey results Sample communications to stakeholders regarding student learning, conditions that support learning, and achievement of school improvement goals School quality control procedures for monitoring information about student learning, conditions that support learning, and the achievement of school improvement goals Executive summaries of student learning reports to stakeholder groups Executive summaries to stakeholder groups Executive summaries to stakeholder groups (Charter Annual DOE reports, district reports, short-term action plans), School Improvement Team minutes, Charter Governing Board minutes, school website, school newsletter	Level 3

Reflect upon your responses to each of the indicators and performance levels by considering and responding to the following questions when drafting your narrative response. Use language from the performance level descriptions to guide your writing. Cite sources of evidence External Review team members may be interested in reviewing.

Areas of strength: collect and analyze data sources, maintain a clearly defined student assessment system.

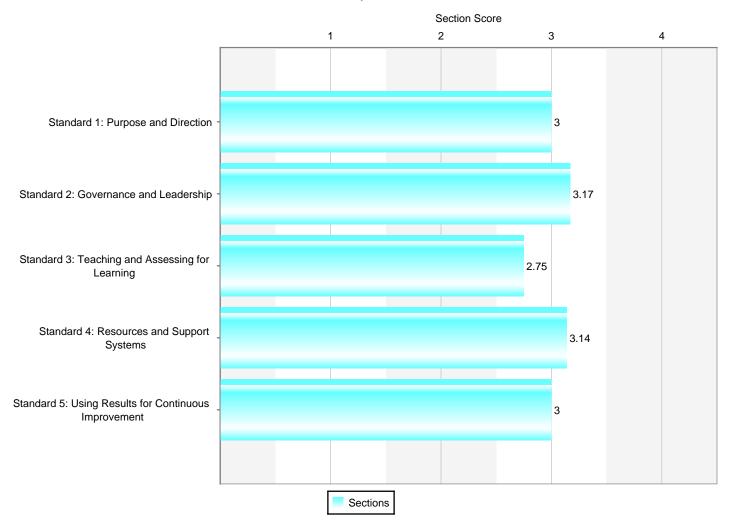
MVES school personnel maintain and use multiple forms of data from multiple assessment measures, including locally developed and standardized assessments about student learning and school performance: Student Learning Objectives (SLOs), county-wide unit assessments, DRAs, CRCT scores, Calendar Math, OAS (GOFAR), and teacher informal assessments. All current and previous data analysis are stored on the local teacher "P" drive for easy access and reference when planning for student learning.

Areas in need of improvement: determine verifiable improvement in student learning with consistent student data.

Additional training for all faculty and support staff in the area of evaluation, interpretation, and use of data is needed to ensure continuous student improvement and the implementation of time and appropriate interventions. We will continue to analyze a range of data sources to provide trend and comparison data to guide our instruction. We need to find a healthy "balance" with student assessments and instruction.

Report Summary

Scores By Section



Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic

The Mount Vernon Exploratory School

Introduction

The Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic is designed to analyze the institution's survey results in terms of areas of achievement and areas that need improvement. Further, the diagnostic is essential to the accreditation and continuous improvement processes in that it provides the institution with a comprehensive view of the aggregate scores of the surveys administered, and the actual total of respondents for each survey type to derive a single score for this diagnostic. The performance level score computed at the completion of the diagnostic is used to broaden and enhance the external review team's understanding of the stakeholder's perceptions of the institution; the diagnostic should be used in the same manner by the institution as it engages in improvement planning.

Stakeholder Feedback Data

Label	Assurance	Response	Comment	Attachment
1.		Yes		MVES Stakeholder
	Data document offline and upload below?			Feedback

Evaluative Criteria and Rubrics

Overall Rating: 4.0

	Statement or Question	Response	Rating
1.	Questionnaire Administration	All required AdvancED questionnaires were used by the institution to receive stakeholder feedback. The minimum response rate for each population was met (parent questionnaire: equal to or greater than 20%, student questionnaire(s): equal to or greater than 40%, staff questionnaire: equal to or greater than 60%). Questionnaires were administered with complete fidelity to the appropriate administrative procedures. In every instance, the stakeholders to whom these questionnaires were administered fully represented the populations served by the institution. Appropriate accommodations were provided as necessary for all participants.	Level 4

	Statement or Question	Response	Rating
2.		Two or more of the stakeholder questionnaires had average item values of 4.30 or higher (on a 5.0 scale). All questionnaires had an average item value of 3.20 or above (on a 5.0 scale). Results of stakeholder feedback collected by the institution were well analyzed and clearly presented.	Level 4

Areas of Notable Achievement

Which area(s) indicate the overall highest level of satisfaction or approval?

Student and Parent surveys rated Standard 1 and Standard 4 and the highest. Staff surveys rated standard 1 and 2 as the highest. Indicators relate to safe environment and high academic standards.

Which area(s) show a trend toward increasing stakeholder satisfaction or approval?

.Other survey data are not comparable in the type of questions with AdvancED. We do not have access to the QAR surveys that were given in 2009. Our Charter surveys contain questions that are more applicable to our charter goals (technology, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking among our students). Therefore, a trend is not measurable.

Which of the above reported findings are consistent with findings from other stakeholder feedback sources?

Charter surveys reflect satisfaction with:

Students- safe and caring environment,

Staff-school vision and focus, technology skills

Parent- student increase in technology skills, critical thinking, and collaboration

Areas in Need of Improvement

Which area(s) indicate the overall lowest level of satisfaction or approval?

Standard 3 for parents and staff surveys, Standard 5 for student surveys. Indicators are related to mentoring/coaching and differentiation.

Which area(s) show a trend toward decreasing stakeholder satisfaction or approval?

Other survey data are not comparable in the type of questions with AdvancED. We do not have access to the QAR surveys that were given in 2009. Our Charter surveys contain questions that are more applicable to our charter goals (technology, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking among our students). Therefore, a trend is not measurable.

What are the implications for these stakeholder perceptions?

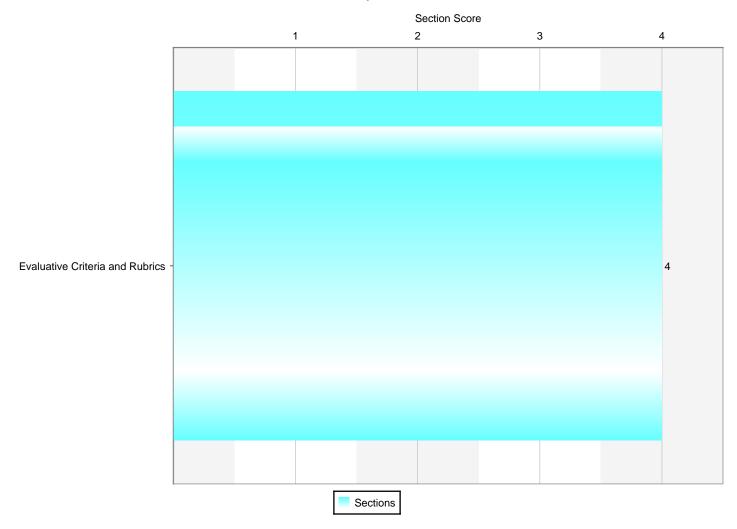
There is a need to focus on a structured coaching/mentoring program for both new staff and one-to-one student/adult relationships. There is always a need to improve differentiation of instruction with limited number of teachers (as compared to Title I schools with more EIP, ESL, and Intervention teachers).

Which of the above reported findings are consistent with findings from other stakeholder feedback sources?

The only somewhat related survey items with weaker areas are different among the stakeholders: communication, quality of education.

Report Summary

Scores By Section



Student Performance Diagnostic

Accreditation Report

The Mount Vernon Exploratory School

Introduction

The Student Performance Diagnostic provides an institution with a process to report summative student assessments. This diagnostic is significant to the accreditation and continuous improvement process as it serves as a resource for schools to view content area assessment results required by the state, district, or other entities, determine the quality and reliability of the given assessments, and show the alignment of the assessments to the school's curriculum. The performance level computed at the completion of the diagnostic is used by the external review team as a comprehensive report to understand fully the institution's assessment program; the diagnostic should be used in the same manner by the institution as it engages in improvement planning.

Student Performance Data

Label	Assurance	Response	Comment	Attachment
1.	Did you complete the Student Performance Data document offline and upload below?	Yes		AdvancED Mount Vernon Exploratory School Student Performance Diagnosttic

Evaluative Criteria and Rubrics

Overall Rating: 3.25

	Statement or Question	Response	Rating
1.	Assessment Quality	The array of assessment devices used by the institution to determine students' performances is sufficiently aligned so that valid inferences can be reached regarding students' status with respect to the majority of those curricular aims regarded as high-priority instructional targets. The documentation provided in support of this alignment is relatively persuasive. Most of the assessments used are accompanied by evidence demonstrating that they satisfy accepted technical requirements.	Level 3

	Statement or Question	Response Rating				
2.	Test Administration	All the assessments used by the institution to determine students' performances, whether externally acquired or internally developed, have been administered with complete fidelity to the administrative procedures appropriate for each assessment. In every instance, the students to whom these assessments were administered are accurately representative of the students served by the institution. Appropriate accommodations have been provided for all assessments so that valid inferences can be made about all students' status with respect to all of the institution's targeted curricular outcomes.	Level 4			

	Statement or Question	Response	Rating
3.	Quality of Learning	Evidence of student learning promoted by the institution is acceptably analyzed and presented with reasonable clarity. In comparison to institutions functioning in a similar educational context, students' status, improvement, and/or growth evidence indicates that the level of student learning is at or above what would otherwise be expected.	Level 3

	Statement or Question	Response	Rating
4.		Evidence of student learning indicates achievement gaps exist among subpopulations of students, and these achievement gaps have noticeably declined.	Level 3

Areas of Notable Achievement

Which area(s) are above the expected levels of performance?

MVES continues to analyze data each year, storing all essential data on our "P" drive for all staff to access when needed. This data has helped us to reach conclusions regarding achievement or other related student learning results. The strengths we noted in our student performance were Reading and Language Arts.

Describe the area(s) that show a positive trend in performance.

Due to our charter and project-based learning, we see positive trends with student performance in science and social studies.

Which area(s) indicate the overall highest performance?

The areas of Reading and English/Language Arts are shown to be our highest student performance levels.

Which subgroup(s) show a trend toward increasing performance?

There are a few subgroups that show a trend toward increasing performance: 5th grade social studies, 4th grade science, and Hispanic social studies.

Between which subgroups is the achievement gap closing?

Our subgroups of English Language Learners and Economically Disadvantaged show the achievement gap is closing.

Which of the above reported findings are consistent with findings from other data sources?

We have reflected current achievement data above from CRCT results and CCRPI data. This data has continued to reflect an Increase in science and social studies scores across the board.

Areas in Need of Improvement

Which area(s) are below the expected levels of performance?

There are a few areas where student performance is below the expected levels of performance: 4th grade math, 3rd grade math, 4th grade social studies, overall math scores continue to decline slightly (with the exception of 5th grade math).

Describe the area(s) that show a negative trend in performance.

There are a few areas that show a negative trend in student performance (with the understanding that student groups change from year to year, some of these groups still show growth): SPED, math scores across the board continue to decline (except 5th grade math).

Which area(s) indicate the overall lowest performance?

The areas of lowest student performance with regards to all achievement data: 4th grade math, 3rd grade math, 4th grade social studies, and SPED.

Which subgroup(s) show a trend toward decreasing performance?

There are two subgroups that show an inconsistent trend toward decreasing performance (considering student groups change each year): SPED, 4th grade math (more up and down, rather than trends).

Between which subgroups is the achievement gap becoming greater?

Our achievement gap scores from the CCRPI reports (2012 and 2013) indicated the gap was improving. Our ED/SWD/EL performance points improved from 2.2 to 2.8 from 2012 to 2013.

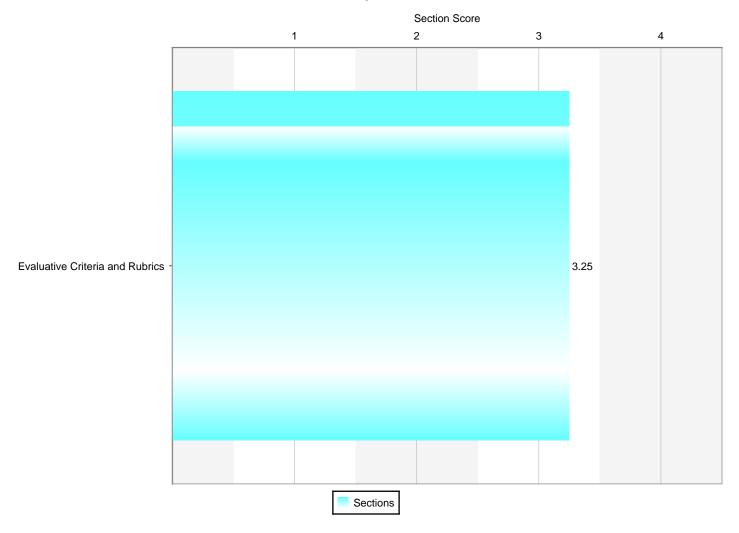
Our SWD students continue to perform significantly below other subgroups as well as all students.

Which of the above reported findings are consistent with findings from other data sources?

We are able to verify our data from RESA, the GaDOE, and our own local data analysis from sources such as CRCT scores, CCRPI data, Hall County unit assessments, DRA scores, and teacher input.

Report Summary

Scores By Section



AdvancED Assurances

Accreditation Report

The Mount Vernon Exploratory School

Introduction

AdvancED Policies and Procedures outline certain requirements that all institutions must meet in order to be in compliance. Institutions are required to verify whether or not they meet these requirements by answering a series of questions and in some cases, attaching evidence for review.

By responding to the questions in ASSIST and attaching evidence when required, the institution has verified whether it meets or does not meet each of the Assurances for Accreditation.

AdvancED Assurances

Label	Assurance	Response	Comment	Attachment
1	The institution has read, understands, and complies with the AdvancED Policies and Procedures.	Yes		

	·	
changes in the institution that affect the scope and/or have an impact on the institution's ability to meet the AdvancED standards and policies. Such changes include, but are not limited to: - Restructuring (merging, opening, or closing) of the institution or institution(s) within its jurisdiction - Mission and purpose of the institution - Governance structure of the institution, including changing to a charter school/school system, being the subject of a state takeover, or a change in ownership - Grade levels served by the institution - Staffing, including administrative and other non-teaching professionals personnel - Available facilities, including upkeep and maintenance - Level of funding - School day or school year - Establishment of an additional location geographically apart from the main campus - Student population that causes program or staffing modification(s) - Available programs, including fine arts,	Yes	

Label	Assurance	Response	Comment	Attachment
	The institution implements a written security and crisis management plan which includes emergency evacuation procedures and appropriate training for stakeholders. Attach the security and crisis management plan. (optional)	Yes		

Label	Assurance	Response	Comment	Attachment
	The institution monitors all financial transactions through a recognized, regularly audited accounting system.	Yes		

Label	Assurance	Response	Comment	Attachment
	The institution engages in a continuous improvement process and implements an improvement plan. Attach the improvement plan if the plan is not located in AdvancED's Adaptive System of School Improvement Support Tools (ASSIST).	Yes		School Improvement Plan MVES 2014-2015